



COURT MARTIAL OF COLONEL GRAFF

TEACHER'S GUIDE

One of the most debatable issues Orson Scott Card's Ender's Game is the justification of violence. Some critics of the book complain that the story justifies Ender's brutality toward other children. But because Ender is only a child, most if not all of the blame for the violent acts he commits could fall on the adults in the story. In the end, the book forces us to ask ourselves, "Is it morally acceptable to endanger and dehumanize a small group of children if it's the only way to save humanity?"

This activity is an engaging way for students to deal with this moral or ethical question.

Objectives:

A lot of times when students are writing or speaking persuasively, they fail to use actual evidence to prove their points. This fun mini-trial lesson is intended to give students some practice doing just that while analyzing Ender's Game. In this lesson, students will:

- Use specific evidence from a novel to support analysis of a character's actions and motives
- Analyze how particular events in a story contribute to the development of a theme or central idea
- Support a claim with logical reasoning and relevant evidence
- Correctly cite quotations from literature

Common Core Standards:

- **Reading Standard 1** - Cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- **Writing Standard 1** - Write arguments to support a substantive claim with clear reasons and relevant and sufficient evidence.
- **Writing Standard 9** - Write in response to literary or informational sources, drawing evidence from the text to support analysis and reflection as well as to describe what they have learned.
- **Speaking and Listening Standard 3** - Evaluate the speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.
- **Speaking and Listening Standard 4** - Present information, evidence, and reasoning in a clear and well-structured way appropriate to purpose and audience.

Lesson Instructions:

This two-day activity should take place either after finishing the novel or before reading the final chapter. To begin, divide the class into three groups: a **prosecution** team, a **defense** team, and a **jury**.

As a class, read through the introduction page using a projector. Spend a few minutes on a short class discussion about the following questions: Do you think Graff is responsible for the deaths of Stilson and Bonzo? Did Graff's actions make Ender a more effective commander? Is it possible that Ender might not have won the Bugger War if Graff had acted differently?

The rest of the first day should be spent with students working individually on finding evidence and quotes from the book and incorporating them into the three required paragraphs. The most important part of the assignment is to use a line from the book as evidence to prove a point, so make sure the students focus on that. Before the students get started, go over the "USING QUOTATIONS" handout. You could share the example paragraphs below—but only if you feel they need that extra scaffolding. For students that are struggling, you could suggest some of the useful quotations on the list included below.

The students who are members of the jury will have a writing assignment on the second day that the attorneys will not have to do, so they could be excused from the first part of this assignment. It might be good to choose jury members from students who need an extra day to work on another assignment or to catch up on reading in the novel.

On the second day, allow the defense and prosecution teams some of the class period to get together and share their ideas. The remainder of the period should be dedicated to the trial.

During the trial, have individual students volunteer to share one piece of evidence at a time. Start with a member of the prosecution team. The student can share his or her evidence by simply reading a paragraph from his or her worksheet or by presenting from memory. Allow some back and forth debate on that piece of evidence. Then allow a student from the defense team to share a single piece of evidence. Continue trading off until there are about ten minutes left.

The jury members should take notes throughout the trial. During the final ten minutes of class, allow the jury members to debate out-loud in front of the class. They should share evidence they thought was convincing and try to persuade one another. At the end of class, the jury members should vote and decide on a verdict. Jury members could write their paragraph-long writing assignment during deliberation, or it could be a homework assignment.

Optional Essay:

You could easily have your students turn this into a full five-paragraph essay. The three evidence paragraphs they write for this activity would become the three body paragraphs. Then students would simply need to write an introduction that introduces the topic and contains a thesis statement (a claim that Graff should be found guilty or not guilty) and a conclusion that reviews the main points and wraps the essay up. Jury members could use their note-taking sheet as a brainstorm and outline for their essay. **A grading rubric for the essay is included with this unit.**



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INTRODUCTION

“It wasn’t murder, Colonel. We have it on video from two angles. No one can blame Ender.”

“But they might blame Graff. After all this is over, the civilians can rake over our files and decide what was right and what was not. Give us medals where they think we were right, take away our pensions and put us in jail where they decide we were wrong.”

(Ender’s Game, pg 226)

The Bugger War is over, and humanity has won! Thanks to the brilliant leadership of Andrew “Ender” Wiggin and his squadron leaders, the world no longer lives in fear of another bugger invasion.

However, as we learn more about these incredible child soldiers, some disturbing accusations have surfaced regarding Colonel Hyrum Graff, the man in charge of the education of Wiggin and the other children. Claims have been made that Colonel Graff mistreated the children at Battle School and instituted an environment where students were exposed to psychological mistreatment, physical violence, and in one case, even death.

The charges against Colonel Graff are Mistreatment of Children and Negligent Homicide. A military court martial will be held to determine what exactly Colonel Graff did or failed to do while he oversaw proceedings at the International Fleet’s Battle School. A military jury will decide whether Graff’s actions constituted the mistreatment of children and resulted in the death of Bonzo Madrid or if everything Graff did was necessary to save humanity and, therefore, justified.

A team of military **prosecutors** will be responsible for documenting and presenting evidence that shows Graff to be guilty of these crimes. A separate team of **defense attorneys** will present evidence to show that Colonel Graff’s actions were necessary and justified.



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Examples of EVIDENCE that could help the DEFENSE:

- “‘I don’t want to go,’ said Ender, ‘but I will’” (pg 26).
- “‘With Ender, we have to strike a delicate balance. Isolate him enough that he remains creative—otherwise he’ll adopt the system here and we’ll lose him. At the same time, we need to make sure he keeps a strong ability to lead’” (pg 27).
- “‘Well, if things go wrong we’ll all be bugger meat. So trust me now, Anderson, and don’t bring the whole... hegemony down on my neck. What I’m doing is hard enough without them’” (pg 99).
- “‘Ender Wiggin is ten times smarter and stronger than I am. What I’m doing to him will bring out his genius. If I had to go through it myself, it would crush me’” (pg 99).
- “‘Ender Wiggin must believe that no matter what happens, no adult will ever, ever step in to help him in any way. He must believe, to the core of his soul, that he can only do what he and the other children work out for themselves. If he does not believe that, then he will never reach the peak of his abilities’” (pg 201).
- “‘Ender Wiggin not only survived, he passed a threshold, he graduated in dazzlingly good shape, you have to give old Graff credit for that’” (pg 225-226).
- “‘The only one I feel sorry for is Ender. But not sorry enough to suggest they ought to let up on him. I just got access to the material that Graff’s been getting all this time. About fleet movements, that sort of thing. I used to sleep at night... They didn’t get him to Command School a day too soon. And maybe a couple of years too late’” (pg 226).
- “‘Humanity does not ask us to be happy. It merely asks us to be brilliant on its behalf. Survival first, then happiness as we can manage it’” (pg 277).
- “Colonel Graff detached himself from the others and came to Ender. Tears streamed down his face, but he was smiling. He bent over, reached out his arms, and to Ender’s surprise he embraced him, held him tightly, and whispered, ‘Thank you, thank you, Ender. Thank God for you, Ender’” (pg 296).
- “‘You don’t know what would have happened if I hadn’t pushed. Nobody knows. I did it the way I did it, and it worked. Above all, it worked’” (pg 299).

Examples of EVIDENCE that could help the PROSECUTION:

- “‘You just saw him beat the guts out of the leader of a gang.’
‘He was thorough. He didn’t just beat him, he beat him deep. Like Mazer Rackham at the—’
‘Spare me. So in the judgment of the committee, he passes.’
‘Mostly’” (pg 9).
- “‘Sometimes I think you enjoy breaking these little geniuses.’
‘There *is* an art to it, and I’m very, very good at it. But enjoy? Well, maybe’” (pg 28).
- “‘Ender checked the roster on his desk that night. Four boys turned up on medical report. One with bruised ribs, one with a bruised testicle, one with a torn ear, and one with a broken nose and a loose tooth. The cause of injury was the same in all cases: ACCIDENTAL COLLISION IN NULL G. If the teachers were allowing that to turn up on the official report, it was obvious they didn’t intend to punish anyone for the nasty little skirmish in the battleroom’” (pg 116).
- “‘He [Dap] feels your neglect of a potentially lethal situation is more than negligence—that it borders on conspiracy to cause the death or serious injury of one of the students here’” (pg 200).
- “‘You have known for eight days that there is a conspiracy among some of the more vicious of these ‘children’ to cause the beating of Ender Wiggin, if they can. And that some members of this conspiracy, notably the boy named Bonito de Madrid, commonly called Bonzo, are quite likely to exhibit no self-restraint when this punishment takes place... And you, fully warned of this danger, propose to do exactly—’
‘Nothing’” (pg 200).
- “‘Ender Wiggin has provoked Bonzo Madrid beyond human endurance. And you have no military police standing by to break up disturbances. It is unconscionable’” (pg 200).
- “‘Where are the teachers? thought Ender. Don’t they realize that the first contact between us in this fight might be the end of it?’” (pg 210).
- “‘I think that Bonzo died. I dreamed about it last night. I remembered the way he looked after I jammed his face with my head. I think I must have pushed his nose back into his brain. The blood was coming out of his eyes. I think he was dead right then... Mazer, I don’t want to keep dreaming these things. I’m afraid to sleep’” (pg 286).
- “‘You had to be a weapon, Ender. Like a gun, like the Little Doctor, functioning perfectly but not knowing what you were aimed at. *We* aimed you. We’re responsible. If there was something wrong, we did it’” (pg 298).



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Example paragraph for the PROSECUTION:

When Colonel Graff is facing possible consequences for the death of a student under his supervision, it's easy to overlook the fact that he also caused some of his students serious psychological damage. Ender Wiggin was the worst of Graff's victims as far as this is concerned. During the Bugger War, Wiggin suffered from debilitating nightmares. **"I think that Bonzo died. I dreamed about it last night. I remembered the way he looked after I jammed his face with my head. I think I must have pushed his nose back into his brain. The blood was coming out of his eyes. I think he was dead right then... Mazer, I don't want to keep dreaming these things. I'm afraid to sleep"** (pg 286). No child should have the death of another human being on his conscience, even if it was in self-defense. Ender may have killed Bonzo Madrid, but the fight only took place because Colonel Graff did nothing to protect his students. And Ender Wiggin will have to live the rest of his life suffering from the psychological pain that Graff's neglect caused him.

Example paragraph for the DEFENSE:

The prosecution might argue that Graff's actions caused Ender Wiggin psychological harm, but Ender willingly volunteered for it. When Graff first invited Ender to come to Battle School, he explained that it would be difficult, that it would be painful, but Ender still agreed. **"I don't want to go," said Ender, "but I will"** (pg 26). Ender understood that sometimes a person has to make sacrifices for the good of others. He understood very well what another hero, Mazer Rackham, taught him: **"Humanity does not ask us to be happy. It merely asks us to be brilliant on its behalf. Survival first, then happiness as we can manage it"** (pg 277). Will Ender Wiggin be forever affected by his experiences at Battle School and Command School? Of course! In the same way that any soldier will forever live with his or her experiences in war. Is it good that soldiers have to suffer psychological harm? Of course not! But they deal with it because they want to protect the people they love. And that's what makes Ender Wiggin and Colonel Graff heroes.



COURT MARTIAL OF COLONEL GRAFF USING QUOTATIONS

When you copy a passage from a novel, short story, or non-fiction source and put it word-for-word into your own essay, it could be **plagiarism**—stealing from someone else’s work. And that’s bad. But sometimes you need to use a passage word-for-word in order to make your point. Here’s the trick—as long as you punctuate it correctly and give credit to the original writer, it’s not stealing or cheating; it’s called **“QUOTING FROM A SOURCE.”**

Here’s how you can **quote from a source** correctly:

- **First of all**, if you are going to use a passage from a source in your own writing, you must type it **WORD-FOR-WORD** as it appears on the original page. That includes capitalization and punctuation. Everything has to be the same.
- **Second**, you have to use quotation marks to show that you are referring to someone else’s words. Here’s an example. On page 8 in *Ender’s Game*, we can find this passage:

He turned and walked away. Nobody followed him.

So if you use this passage in your essay, you need to put quotation marks around it, like this:

“He turned and walked away. Nobody followed him.”

If the passage in the book has quotation marks in it already, we need to include those to avoid confusing your reader. In your essay, use a single apostrophe (half of a quotation mark) to indicate any quotation marks on the original page. It ends up looking like this:

“‘It wouldn’t be this bad,’ Ender said. ‘It would be worse.’”

- **Finally**, you need to give credit to the original author. In an essay like this where we know all of the quotes are coming from *Ender’s Game*, we can give credit to Orson Scott Card simply by indicating a page number. We put the page number in parentheses after the final quotation marks, and then we move the final period after the parentheses. It looks like this:

“‘It wouldn’t be this bad,’ Ender said. ‘It would be worse’” (pg 8).

“He turned and walked away. Nobody followed him” (pg 8).



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Name:

Period:

You are the military **prosecuting attorney** for the Court Martial of Colonel Graff. Your job is to prove that Graff willingly put children at Battle School in physical and psychological danger and that his neglect directly led to the death of Bonzo Madrid.

Review *Ender's Game* and try to find **evidence** that you could use to prove that Colonel Graff is **guilty**. The evidence you are looking for is anything that shows Graff knew children at Battle School were in danger and he did nothing to prevent them from being harmed. You particularly want to find evidence showing that Graff could have prevented Bonzo's death but didn't.

Write a full paragraph (at least five or six full sentences) for each piece of evidence. And in each paragraph, use a passage from the novel to prove your point. **HINT:** The adult conversations at the beginning of each chapter and at the end of one chapter are a great source of evidence.

First Piece of Evidence (Paragraph #1):

Second Piece of Evidence (Paragraph #2):

First Piece of Third (Paragraph #3):



COURT MARTIAL OF COLONEL GRAFF

Name:

Period:

You are the military **defense attorney** for the Court Martial of Colonel Graff. Your job is to prove that Graff did only what was necessary to help Ender Wiggin become the commander that humanity needed and that he should therefore not be held responsible for what happened to Bonzo Madrid or any other students at Battle School.

Review *Ender's Game* and try to find **evidence** that you could use to prove that Colonel Graff is **not guilty**. The evidence you are looking for is anything that shows Graff's reasons for allowing students at Battle School to be in danger. And most importantly, you want to show that what he did worked—that what he did made Ender Wiggin a commander capable of beating the buggers.

Write a full paragraph (at least five or six full sentences) for each piece of evidence. And in each paragraph, use a passage from the novel to prove your point. **HINT:** The adult conversations at the beginning of each chapter and at the end of one chapter are a great source of evidence.

First Piece of Evidence (Paragraph #1):

Second Piece of Evidence (Paragraph #2):

First Piece of Third (Paragraph #3):



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Jury Note-Taking Sheet

Name:

Period:

What evidence was presented to show that Graff is **GUILTY**?

What evidence was presented to show that Graff is NOT GUILTY?

Now decide—do you think Graff should be found guilty or not guilty? Write a paragraph to explain your decision: